

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION

EDDIE STONE, IND & ANF SXXXXXX
SXXXX & ANF EXXXXXX SXXXX

vs.

SAFECO GENERAL AGENCY, INC.
& HOME STATE COUNTY MUTUAL
INSURANCE COMPANY

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Civil Action No. 16-cv-01970
(JURY)

NOTICE OF REMOVAL

Defendant General Insurance Company of America (incorrectly named as “Safeco General Agency, Inc. & Home State County Mutual Insurance Company”) timely files this Notice of Removal pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a), 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a), and 28 U.S.C. §1446(b), removing this action from the 129th Judicial District Court of Harris County, Texas to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Houston Division and in support thereof show as follows:

A. Introduction

1. Plaintiffs commenced this lawsuit against Defendants in the 129th Judicial District Court of Harris County, Texas on, or about, April 21, 2016. A true and correct copy of the Original Petition along with documents reflecting service are attached hereto as Exhibit “1.” Plaintiffs served the Original Petition on Defendant General Insurance Company of America through its registered agent on June 9, 2016.

2. Defendant is filing this Notice of Removal within 30 days of its first receipt of Plaintiffs’ Original Amended Petition as required by 28 U.S.C. § 1446(b).

3. Plaintiffs seek to recover damages in this lawsuit based on allegations of breach of contract, breach of the duty of good faith and fair dealing and negligence resulting from the alleged conduct of Defendants. Plaintiffs' claims against Defendant arise under an automobile policy of insurance issued by General Insurance Company of America to Jasen & Linda Austersmiller. Plaintiffs were using a Ford Ranger insured under the policy when they were in an accident occurring in Houston, Texas. They now seek to recover under the underinsured motorist coverage afforded under the policy.

B. Jurisdiction & Removal

5. This Court has jurisdiction in the case pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1332, in that there is complete diversity of citizenship between the parties. Accordingly, statutory authority for the removal of this matter is conferred by 28 U.S.C. §§ 1441 and 1446.

6. Plaintiffs are citizens of the State of either Arizona or Texas. General Insurance Company of America is a corporation organized under the laws of the State of New Hampshire, with its principal place of business in Boston, Massachusetts.

7. Plaintiffs' Petition states they are seeking monetary relief between \$200,000.00 and \$1,000,000.00. Therefore, the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000.00.

8. Venue is proper in this district and division under 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a) because the state court where the action has been pending is located in this district and division.

9. Contemporaneous with the filing of this Notice of Removal, Defendant is filing a Notice of Filing Notice of Removal with the Clerk of Court for the 234th Judicial District Court of Harris County, Texas pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1446(d).

10. Attached hereto are all documents required by LR 81, USDC/SDTX Local Rules and 28 U.S.C. § 1446(a).

11. Defendant demanded a jury in the state court action. Defendant also requests a trial by jury pursuant to Rule 81(c)(3)(A), Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and LR 38.1, USDC/SDTX Local Rules.

12. All fees required by law in connection with this Notice have been tendered and paid by Defendant.

WHEREFORE, General Insurance Company of America hereby removes the above-captioned matter now pending in the 129th Judicial District Court of Harris County, Texas to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Houston Division.

Respectfully submitted,

SHEEHY, WARE & PAPPAS, P.C.

By: /s/ J. Mark Kressenberg
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**ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANT GENERAL
INSURANCE COMPANY OF AMERICA**

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the above foregoing instrument has been forwarded via e-filing in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure on this the 5th day of July, 2016, to the following counsel of record:

Jerry V. Hernandez
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/s/ J. Mark Kressenberg

J. Mark Kressenberg

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